

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
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3	EXDIR		X		
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6	DDA		X		
7	DDO		X		
8	DDS&T		X		
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC		X		
11	IG		X		
12	Compt				
13	D/Pers				
14	D/OLL				
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Remarks

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Executive Secretary

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Senate Select Committee

on Intelligence

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SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY REMARKS TO THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

JANUARY 30, 1985

Usually on this Committee I do not make many formal statements. I prefer to leave as much time as possible for questions and discussions.

You will all doubtless be happy to hear that I intend to continue that custom.

However, this is a special occasion, and I hope everyone will bear with a somewhat lengthy statement on what I think this Committee needs to do.

Congratulate New Members

First congratulations to our nine new Members, and, welcome back to the band of six holdovers.

Partisanship has no place on this very unique Committee. I believe we Democrats understand this and will work constructively with the majority to maintain as effective an intelligence capability as possible.

Introduce Key Staff

As all of you know, the Chairman and I are committed to building a professional and nonpartisan staff to serve the Members. Let me introduce two key Committee staff appointed by the Minority.

First is Mr. Eric Newsom, the new Minority Staff Director. Eric was my designated staff representative for two and a half years, and I have the greatest confidence in him.

Second is Mr. Daniel Finn, the new Minority Counsel. Dan was Danny Inouye's designee for over two years. I am delighted to have him remain as Minority Counsel.

As far as I am concerned, Eric and Dan work for the whole Committee, as should all of the staff. The Committee's rules provide that the Minority Staff Director has the right to know everything that the Staff Director knows. That right is essential



-2-

to the proper functioning of the Committee, both to ensure that the Minority Members are fully informed, and to enable Eric to assist the Staff Director in managing the staff efficiently.

Cooperation with the Chairman

The Chairman and I have kept in close touch over the past several weeks, and have worked harmoniously together in preparing for the grueling year ahead. I believe a cooperative relationship is essential for the Committee to deal with the difficult and sometimes controversial issues facing us.

Relations with the Democratic Members

At the same time, I believe my role as Vice Chairman requires me to represent to the Chairman the views of the Minority on the Committee. Every Member will have particular interests or issues he wishes the Committee to pursue in hearings or through the staff.

I fully intend to support the interests of the Democratic Members of the Committee when decisions are made about allocating the Committee's time and staff resources.

Special Nature of the Committee

Before I turn to the Committee's agenda, I'd like to supplement some of the things the Chairman has said about the special nature of the Intelligence Committee.

I've already mentioned bipartisanship. This Committee works successfully only on a genuinely bipartisan basis. We have access to the most sensitive intelligence information. Our role is to make proper use of that access for very specific purposes ... and political advantage is definitely, repeat, definitely, not one of them.

We have three basic tasks:

One. We must ensure that the Intelligence Community has the resources necessary to provide the information the Nation needs to protect its security and advance its interests. Over the last several years the Committee, and the Senate, have been generous in providing those resources. However, decisions about how much we can afford for intelligence are not going to be as easy this year and into the future.

Two. We are responsible for carrying out effective oversight of the Intelligence Community. The Committee has been entrusted by the Senate and the American people to ensure, virtually in complete secrecy, that the intelligence agencies operate efficiently, within the law, and according to fundamental American values. Our guardians must never become the instruments of our oppression.

-3-

There is no doubt the confidence of the Senate and the American people was shaken by events last year relating to Central America. We have a special duty to restore that trust.

Three. On behalf of the entire Senate, relying on our access to sensitive intelligence, we must provide to the intelligence agencies policy and political perspectives on their activities and responsibilities. In the area of covert action or clandestine operations, this means we have to make sure the Executive Branch gives adequate consideration to whether a contemplated activity is politically sustainable. This Committee can offer objective judgment on the value of planned intelligence activities for American policy.

We will be expected to make a judgment for the Senate ... and ultimately for the entire government ... on the verifiability of any arms agreement. We cannot just wait until the President presents a treaty for ratification. The Committee must follow the evolution of proposals at every step of the way, injecting its views at the time so the President can take them into account.

A final word on the special nature of this Committee.

Secrecy is our normal mode of operation. Unlike practically everything else we do as Senators, it is necessary to resist the temptation to seek public recognition for what we do in secret. For my part, I pledge the greatest care in my contacts with the press, as I have in the past. I strongly urge all my colleagues to exercise the utmost restraint in contacts with the press.

The Chairman and I have decided to name David Holiday to serve as Press Spokesman for the Committee. Dave was recommended by Senator Boren, and is a superb choice. This appointment should improve the Committee's relationship with the press, which has not been good, while helping individual Members deal with the press on specific matters without infringing on our commitment to secrecy.

Committee Organization and Agenda

The Chairman has outlined how he plans to proceed over the next few months. We have consulted closely on this, and I support his approach. Our first priority is to scrutinize the Intelligence Community budget. That will take practically all our time and attention through the month of March and into April.

Eventually, we must look at the Committee's structure and consider what subcommittee organization would best serve the Committee's needs. Frankly, the old subcommittees had become practically moribund, with the exception of the Budget Subcommittee, and it was practically overwhelmed during the budget hearing cycle.

-4-

In addition to the budget review, I see several additional items on our agenda this year.

- Nicaragua. The Chairman wants to deal with the issue of aid to the Contras in the budget hearings when and if we receive a request from the Administration to renew funding. More than anything else, this issue was responsible for the problems this Committee had over the last two years. Because it has become a major foreign policy issue for the Senate and the whole country, it does not fit into the normal mold of Intelligence Committee issues.

For the moment, let me simply say that I will work with the Chairman and the Members to find a constructive means to deal with this issue, consistent with defending my own strongly held views.

- Compliance with Arms Agreements. Within a few days, the President is to submit a new report to the Congress on Soviet compliance or noncompliance with its obligations under various arms agreements. With our special access to intelligence gathering capabilities, we will be faced with a major policy problem: What should this Committee tell the Senate about Soviet compliance with arms control treaties?

In my view, the Chairman and I should speak to leaders of Foreign Relations and Armed Services and see if a workable approach could be developed to consider the foreign policy, defense, negotiating and intelligence implications of whatever the President says.

- Arms Control Verification. The President is resuming formal negotiations with the Soviets on strategic, intermediate and space weapons. The Senate will look to us to be thoroughly versed in the verification question when and if the President submits an agreement. We cannot wait until we see the text of a treaty to start learning. Hearings and briefings on each side's proposals and U.S. monitoring capabilities and judgments should begin as quickly as possible. In that connection, the Chairman and I have invited Ambassador Paul Nitze to the Committee in early February to talk about where the arms negotiations may take us. We plan to follow that with a general session later in the month with Secretary Shultz.

- Terrorism. This is a special concern to me. I fear the growing danger of a terrorist group gaining control of a nuclear device or a chemical weapon capable of mass destruction. Terrorism is clearly spreading, both as a tactic of subnational groups like the PLO, Islamic Jihad and the Red Brigade, and as a policy instrument of certain states such as Iran. The target is mainly the West, and the United States in particular.

-5-

The Administration is attempting to devise an effective counterterrorism policy and capability. From my own briefings into their activities, I personally do not believe we are much better prepared to fight terrorism than we were during Desert One or the bombings of the Embassy and Marine headquarters in Beirut. Thorough hearings on terrorism and our counterterrorism capabilities is one of my top priorities this year.

Last week, I asked Democratic Members to put forward their own agenda items. I know Senator Nunn is concerned about what DoD is doing in the area of Special Operations, as I am. This is one of our main weapons against terrorism, yet I am convinced the whole Special Operations effort is bogged down in inter-Service rivalries, tangled lines of command and responsibility, poor training and inadequate equipment, and lack of attention by the JCS. I hope Sam will help the Committee pursue intelligence aspects of the DoD Special Operations issue.

Fritz Hollings told me he is deeply concerned about the hardships and dangers our men and women in intelligence are facing, and the growing disincentives for the best people to go into intelligence work. This is a serious problem, and I look to Fritz to get the Committee involved in that area.

Obviously, the Committee will spend much time on issues which arise in the course of the year. Following a set agenda too rigidly is not possible. Still, we need a sense of what is important in the longer term for the Committee to dedicate itself to. I hope my Democratic colleagues, and the Republic side as well will come to the Chairman and me with your own interests and concerns.

Conclusion

I promise not to make another speech as long as this one. I'll end by saying I am proud to be on this Committee, and stimulated by the challenges which are ahead of us. I'll miss the Members who have departed, but I am absolutely confident that with the strong new Membership we now have, the Committee will meet its responsibilities to the Senate and to the American people.

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